13: Mukherjee E-5 (1954)1958 AR7 Khasi AR7

596 extended form more often when the children of the deceased sisters of *Ka-khadduh* reside there. This extension is on the mother's side and is affiliated through the extension of mother-child relationship.

Additional members like widower brothers or widowed sisters make the Khasi family a composite one.

In a Khasi family father, mother and her brother are very important. Father who is regard[1] as *Mynder* (stranger) or *Ushong kha* (begetter), has also the position of *Kynrad* (master) of the house (set-up by him). He is the executive head and the mother is the *de jure* owner of the household.

177 Modern conditions and spread of Christianity have greatly
178 affected the Khasi society and changed the Khasi ways of life
604 but have failed to alter the traditional mode of inheritance even
593 among the Christian Khasis. Another important fact which is
[428] apparent in the Khasi families, is the change of the status of the mother's brother (*Uknii*) in his sister's house. His influence has greatly been diminished due to clash with *Ka-Khadduh* (heiress). He has almost lost his control over his sister's
[562] family. This has made the women exert their status to a danger point. Consequently, some amount of maladjustment in the relationship system, moral depravity and disintegration loom large in the family horizon.

Family is the core of Khasi social organization and the
596 closeness of familial kin with the members of the sub-clan is
613 due more to the fact that sub-clan owes its development to the family. A *Shi-K'poh* (member of sub-clan) is a secondary relative and can easily be approached for any help.

The functions of the above mentioned social groupings are
614 as follows :

Clan (*Ka-Kur*)—It regulates marriage. It being a larger non-residential kin group contact between its members is infrequent. The amount of social participation needed on certain level to intensify the relationship among its members falls far short of. But nevertheless, there existed among the members

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764

[1] [should read: regarded.—Analyst]

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

4. The Bhoi — occupy the northern slopes of the Khasi Hills, covered with thick semi-tropical forests; they practise jhum cultivation. 619

5. The Lynngam — inhabit the western border of the Khasi Hills, near the Garo Hills. They are said to be half-Khasi and half-Garo. Their economy is similar to that of the Bhoi.

These ecological and geographical differences correspond also to politico-historical differences. From the 16th century to 1835, eve of the annexation of the Jaintia Hills to the Khasi Hills under the British administration, the people of the Jaintia Hills formed part of the Hindu Jaintia kingdom, whose capital was Jaintiapur, on the border of the present East Pakistan and of the Jaintia Hills. The capital, at one time, was moved to Nortiang near Jowai in the heart of the Jaintia Hills. The Jaintia Hills were administrated by twelve governors. Such a highly developed economic system as based on wet rice cultivation, must have helped a great deal in forming a kingdom adjoining the plain. Through the common economy and political organization with the Hindus of the plain, the Hindu civilization of the Bengal plain penetrated deeply among the Jaintias, who are matrilineal hill dwellers. 175 648

On the other hand, the Khasi Hills have remained outside the histories of either Assam or Bengal. They were governed by a number of petty native chiefs: there were twenty-five chiefs ruling the Khasi Hills when the British colonial administration was established there. Most of these chiefs belonged to the Siem clan. The history of the Khasi Hills had been shrouded in darkness till the beginning of the 19th century, except for fragmentary stories such as Khasi raids on the Sylhet people.

The development of the upland Khasi Hills started with the establishment of its headquarters at Shillong in 1874. Since then the features of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills have changed a great deal. What was once a small Khasi hamlet, untouched by the light of history, has become nowadays a busy modern town where many Khasi intellectuals live, mixing with various outsiders who are engaged in official work or in business. The British administration opened the way to missionary activities, especially that of the Welsh Calvinist Methodists who set up a mission in the Hills in 1841, almost at the same time as British political influence began to make itself felt in the Khasi Hills. Along with the political penetration from Cherrapunjee (1833) to Shillong, missionaries established many institutions, including churches, schools and hospitals, etc. Christian education, bringing with it the promise of clerical positions, attracted young Khasi a great deal; and the majority of the upland Khasi have been converted to Christianity. They have become the modern intellectuals of their people. 178 • 648 797 [871] [743]

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

137 Besides these political and religious changes, there have been very
178 important changes in Khasi economy, particularly by the spread of
244 potato cultivation. Potatoes were first introduced into the Hills in 1830 by Mr. David Scott. Since then, the upland Khasi Hills have been completely planted with potatoes. This grassland seems to be very easily adapted to potato cultivation; it spread so rapidly and successfully, becoming basic economy of the people, that they hardly remember life without potatoes. Information is very scanty on what was the major cultivation before the potato. However, we may surmise that they must have practised jhum cultivation as do the present people in War and Bhoi. Nowadays, there are no jhum fields in the uplands as there are practically no forests with which to make jhum fields. There must have been a long period of jhum cultivation, which resulted in recent ecological changes in the uplands through the exploitation of the jungle. This hypothesis might be supported by the existence of big timbers in old buildings in the Khasi Hills, as well as by the present economic techniques of the people.

137 The present potato cultivation is also a kind of shifting cultivation
244 like jhuming, with a rotation from three years to five years. The
241 uplands are covered with grassland, and sometimes with scanty pine trees which were also introduced by the British. For potato cultivation, the Khasi first cut branches from these pine trees, and the grassland is cultivated by the small Khasi hoe. They root out grasses with earth attached about three inches in depth and one foot square. These pieces are turned unto the cultivated surface, where fallen leaves, branches and wild grass have been spread, in such a way as to keep a space between the ground and the turned up clods of earth. The field in which the potatoes are to be planted is entirely covered in this way. The grass and leaves are set on fire in one corner of the field and this fire spreads through the middle spaces and burns all of the grass and branches, thus converting it into excellent manure. The potatoes are planted afterwards. Two crops of potatoes are raised generally in a year. The following year the field is shifted to another grass-growing area, leaving for a few years the last field to grow another crop of grass. This is a type of small-scale jhum cultivation. This example of the present economic method suggests that
178 the Khasi had been jhum cultivators before potatoes were introduced.
244 It might be indicative of the last stage of jhum cultivation when the
[241] forests are completely exhausted. Before the potatoes, they must have grown yams, maize and millet more or less in the same manner; these items are still cultivated on a small scale along with potatoes; the yield must be very low as compared with that of the War areas, obtained through the exploitation of land. In the uplands, pan culti-

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

vation is impossible because of the cold climate. In the past, Khasi economy must have remained at a very primitive stage.

Potato cultivation has been much encouraged along with the development of Shillong and the opening of the motor road to Gauhati from Shillong after the Independence of India when Shillong became the seat of the Assam Government, as well as the capital of the Khasi-Jaintia Hills. Shillong has become an important trading centre, where big merchants collect the harvests of potatoes in exchange for rice, clothes and various other goods from the Assam valley. These changes have introduced the Khasis into an active commercial economy which again has brought about various changes in their social life. Recently coal excavations have started in the upland Khasi Hills, and many Khasi become miners.

Thus the history of the Khasi Hills during the last hundred years has changed a great deal the picture of the Hills. However, dark corners still remain in Bhoi, War and in the area bordering on the Garo Hills. These have been kept in a vacuum between the Hindu civilization of the bordering plain and the modernization of the uplands centred in Shillong. In these areas, the people are still practising primitive jhum cultivation. I have chosen two villages in War located in one of these area as subjects of my major field-work.

[P. 100 is blank]

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

exception. As I pointed out in the last chapter on the Garo, private ownership started with wet cultivation. In Kongton, there are no common (village) or clan land: every piece of land is owned by some household—more precisely it is owned by the woman, the head of a household, and managed by her brother or maternal uncle. The majority of households in Kongton possesses land. Some of the richer households lend the land while some of the poorer households lease it. The rate for leases is Rs. 90/- per year for an area where one maund (80 lbs.) of millet seeds can be sown. As there is no acreage system, the measurement is by quantity of seeds, and since shifting cultivation requires a change of field every year, the rent is fixed by the year. The pan-leaf gardens, also privately owned, are never leased. When labour is required, the owner engages villagers, paying them Rs. 3/- per day.

In Sohkynduh, there are some lands called "clan land." Throughout the history of the formation of Sohkynduh village, as reconstructed from my data, can be traced some evidence of the evolution of land ownership. The first inhabitants of Sohkynduh were said to be the people belonging to the Prarian clan (See Lists 6 and 7). It seems that when the Prarian came to this site, the land already belonged to the Dkhar clan of Rymmai village, five miles north of Sohkynduh. The present distribution of land ownership confirms this story. The jhum field belonging to Sohkynduh is divided into four sections according to the locality:

1. Lum Sohkynduh
2. Sohliang
3. Mawkhalai
4. Lumpalong

One part of Lum Sohkynduh belongs to the Prarian clan. The rest of Lum Sokynduh, Sohliang and Mawkhalai belong to the Dkhar clan of Rymmai village, the management of which is in the hands of Phrensing who came from Rymmai and married a woman of Sokynduh. Lumpalong is owned by Sor (Kynshah clan, 32 of List 6) privately. The Prarian and Dkhar lands are used by their descendants respectively. The people of other clans have to pay a rent of Rs. 80/- to use these clan lands. For the land which belongs to Sor, even the people of the same clan (Kynshah) have to pay rent since this land is privately owned. Thus the land of Sohkynduh belongs partly to particular clans and partly to a private owner.

Gurdon explains the existence of the clan land in the Khasi Hills as follows:

> "The clan lands originally, when population was sparse, were owned by families, but as the members of the family increased and a clan was formed, the lands became the property of the clan instead of the family. Such clan lands are properly demarcated by stone boundary marks. The manager of the clan

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

178 423 614 lands is the *kni* (maternal uncle of the youngest daughter of the main family, or branch of the clan), whose house '*ka iing khadduh*,' or last house, is the place for performing all the religious ceremonies of the clan, and is also called *ka iig seng*. All the members of the clan are, however, entitled to share in the produce of any of the clan lands they may cultivate. No clan lands can be alienated without the consent of a durbar of the whole clan" (Gurdon, 1914, p. 88).

178 423 428 614 Theoretically we can assume that the land was owned by the family (precisely, *iing*, the matrilineal descent group at the lowest segmentation, the structure of which will be discussed later) who first claimed the right to the land, and was managed by the maternal uncle of the youngest daughter, the heiress entitled to the property. In course of time, with the increase of the descent members and with fissions of the descent group, this land was inherited through the youngest daughter's line, but other members who had become segments of the main descent group had a right to use the land, so long as they remained in the same area. Newcomers who belonged to another clan were not granted the same right and had to pay rent. According to the information I was able to collect, even people of the same clan could not claim the right to use the land, unless they were the direct matrilineal descendants of the women who first owned the land. In this sense, the descent group solidarity at a lower level is much stronger than that of the Garo.

Therefore, newly possessed or purchased land is always owned by the individual family (*iing*, descent group). This Khasi conception of land ownership produces a picture of predominant private ownership of land, combined with high geographical mobility of the population (see p. 112). In such circumstances, it seems that even the land called "clan land" has been alienated or sold frequently, and has developed small holdings to suit the small segments of descent groups. In particular, when the entitled owner moved away to another area, the land was sold. For instance, in Sohkynduh, the maternal uncle of Sor (mentioned above) purchased the land indicated above about ten years ago from a family of Siem Lyngngoh who left for another village. This land was originally purchased by the Siem Lyngngoh from the Dkhar to whom the land belonged as part of the clan land.

Under this system, clan ownership of land can develop only (1) when the members of the descent group remain in the same community for a considerable period and (2) when there is sufficient land to accomodate all members. I think these are the main reasons why land-holding at present among the Khasi is found to be in small descent groups—in one household as in Kongton in most cases, and this I call private ownership. For the second reason, further explanation is

178 423 428

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necessary. The chances of acquiring a piece of land nowadays are small, except for very successful men, and usually the size of the plot is only just enough to maintain one household. When this land is passed on to the next generation, the youngest daughter will hold the title to it. This fact tends to exclude married elder sisters from the right to use the land, since it is not sufficient for more than one household. Thus the ultimogeniture succession rule seems to have developed more sharply and to have encouraged limited inheritance in conjunction with the shortage of land.

This tendency creates unbalance in the economy of the households within a community. It is a usual picture in Khasi villages, for the bigger and well-built houses to be occupied by the youngest daughter's family, while the elder sisters reside in poor huts. Youngest daughters are usually landowners, while their elder sisters have often to become day-labourers after their marriage, unless their husbands are capable men, or their fathers wealthy enough to give them some share of their acquired property. On the whole, the variations at present between rich and poor are considerable in a Khasi community, in comparison with that of the Garo, where the economic condition of each household in a village is more or less similar. These differences are not only a matter of economic organization but arise from the nature of each social structure.

The economic and social patterns of Sohkynduh and Kongton are very similar, but their dialects are slightly different: my interpreter, who came from Cherrapunje, could work quite well at Sohkynduh, but at Kongton he found some difficulty, especially with the speech of the old men, and with their religious expressions. The head man of Kongton, who was quite accustomed to the Cherra dialect, acted as an interpreter for us. Such differences in dialect in the Khasi Hills are common phenomena; it is said that every valley has its own dialect. Differences are found not only in speaking, but also, to a certain extent, in culture and in social usages.

II. Village Endogamy

One of the outstanding features of Khasi social organization is the predominant tendency of endogamy on the level of the village, which contrasts with the structural orientation of the Garo village exogamy. This is closely connected with the distributions of clans and the nature of the descent groups.

The Khasi population consists of a number of *kur*, matrilineal clans, whose members consider themselves to be descended from a common ancestress. The members of the same *kur* have a common

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

613 614 621 formed independent descent groups by individual households, for which no traceable genealogical relation with any other descent groups could be established, though some of them belonged to the same *kur*. In Sohkynduh, the total 48 households were divided into 16 *kur* (according to the house-owner), and in Kongton, the total 62 households were divided into 9 *kur*, while the number of actual descent groups amount to 31 in Sohkynduh and 41 in Kongton.

166 178 613 614 621 This fact, I presumed, indicated a considerable mobility of the population of each village community. Hence, I tried my best to reconstruct the historical alignments of these descent groups, both from my genealogical data and with the help of the villagers' memory. The result showed that the mobility of the population over the last fifty years had been surprisingly great and complex. In Sohkynduh, the Praian clan seems to be the oldest inhabitants of this village with 16 *kur* segments. Next came a family of the Ksing. The third wave was a family of Khonglam, and the fourth, Siem Lyngngoh which I mentioned previously (p. 104). The next were families of the Kynshah, many members of which had left for Nonprian village after a few years. The sixth wave was the Srieh family. All the above movements took place before the great earthquake of 1897 which shook Assam. After 1897 the movements became more intense and complicated, and involved many families of various *kur*. The villagers could not remember the order in which they came: there has been continual coming and going even up to now. At present, the Prarian, the Ksing, the Khonglam, the Kynshah and the Dkhar are the older among the 16 *kur*. However, such migrations concern usually a single family only, not a group of *kur*, and that is the typical pattern of Khasi migration. Hence, families which have the same *kur* name do not always indicate the same movements. The incentive for such migration seems to be to get land better appropriated to one's economic condition. Particularly, as I have already mentioned elsewhere (p. 105), the shortage of land seems to encourage families of elder sisters who have no share of property, to move to other areas and look for land.

Thus, many households which make up the present village are minor segments of different *kur*, or of the same *kur*, but they can hardly trace their genealogical relations to one another. A migration to a new village was not undertaken at random; it was mostly as a result of information received from neighbouring villages, or from those where friends or relatives had already settled in. Several neighbouring villages usually dispose of more than one common market where they can exchange information and developed friendships over trading. The matrilineal kinship relation is no more important a factor than any of the others mentioned above. Among the Khasi,

178 613 614 621

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

the matrilineal descent group has a distinguished function only when there is common residence and common property.

In Kongton, among 9 different *kur* (List 10), Pohnong and Khonsit accounted for the majority of the population, while the rest, seven *kur*, were more or less of equal size. On the whole the population seemed more stable than that of Sohkynduh. However, as in Sohkynduh, actual descent groups amounted to 41, many of which have the same *kur* name but could not always establish genealogical relationship with one another; nor was there any functional cohesion. I failed to reconstruct the history of the formation of these descent groups: the villagers had no memory of their past except very fragmentary information which was quite insufficient to account for their present composition. They only insisted this was a very old village in comparison with Sohkynduh and other neighbouring villages.

While I was struggling with the villagers' scant accounts of their past and fragmented kinship relations among the present households, I was struck by the poorness of the villagers' genealogical memory in comparison with that of the Garo. Suppose A, B and C, who belonged to the same property-holding descent group three generations back: A and B being sisters and C being B's daughter. If B, including her descendants, moved away from the village two generations back, the present generation of A's and C's descendants would easily lose contact and knowledge of their genealogical relationship. This fact, on the other hand, illustrates some important aspects of the Khasi social structure: the kinship relation—matrilineal descent link—is not a significant factor beyond the scale of the household (property-holding descent group), and locality is more important than matrilineal descent for the formation of the Khasi community. Through the predominant practice of endogamy on the level of the village, the small segments (found on a level of a household or a group of a few households) of various different *kur* clustered in a village are linked by affinal relations each other, by which altogether form a well knit social organization of a village community. The cohesion and solidarity of the Khasi village community is strengthened by the local endogamy not by the localized lineage organization.

In fact, in contrast with the rather loose kinship relations which link different households, the affinal relations link almost every households in the village, as shown in Fig. 10. The lines, ———, indicate marriage relations between living members of households, and the lines, - - - - -, indicate affinal relations established through dead members of present households or through spouses' kinship relations at Sohkynduh, as in November 1955. In this way, except for one household (24), members of a single household are all linked together through affinal or cognatic ties. In some cases, the affinal relations between

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

some clerical work. However, such instances are very rare in these regions and few Christians are to be found among the people. So far as my genealogical table accounts for, only two boys from Sohkynduh, and one girl and one boy from Kongton, left for Shillong, and married there. In contrast to these exceptional cases in these villages, in the upland Khasi Hills, there are considerable changes in the composition of a village with high geographical and social mobility of population because of the spread of Christian education and urban influence.

The people of the two villages say that marriages with outside people were not formally practised, and were only a recent tendency. However, the composition of the population of the two villages showed extensive movements of population in the past (not to urban areas, but from village to village). Such movement is attributed mostly to migration by a family rather than by an individual on marriage. This type of migration is clearly found also in the process of the formation of Jatinga village (see Appendix, Jatinga).

The composition of the village community and the social characteristics of Sohkynduh and Kongton show very similar features of village endogamy. They seem to be typical of the traditional pattern of Khasi villages. Village endogamy is the intrinsic pattern among the Khasis. This fact can be also observed to a considerable degree in Shella and Jatinga.

[P. 116 is blank]

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

of marriages between these two *kur*. Such marriage arrangements cannot be regarded as constituting a cross-cousin institution. From my data of four villages it was not possible to produce any institutionalized pattern.

In general, the selection of a marital partner depends mainly on personal choice, though the authority of the *iing* (descent group) and parents should be consulted. The man proposes to the girl. The network of marriage relations among the Khasi seems in no way to follow any set principle. Every marriage is likely to be fortuitous: it is ruled simply by temporary personal liking, except for the strict rule of exogamy and the avoidance of near kin.

Exogamy is strictly kept. In the olden days breaking this rule was equivalent to being sentenced to death. Offenders had their heads shaved in a particular way and had to leave the Khasi community completely. Even now such a marriage is considered as the worst kind of sin; a Khasi Christian intellectual said to me that it was worse than homicide. I came across one couple who had broken this rule. Though they had different *kur* names, both *kur* were segments of one common *kur*. It happened in Jatinga, one of the most modern Khasi communities whose inhabitants were all Christians. The couple were not allowed to have their house inside the village. Their house was in the jungle about one mile away from the village.

Successive sororate marriage—marriage to a younger sister of the late wife—is practised, since it justifies the widower in remaining in the same household as his children after his wife's death. Otherwise, the Khasi rule demands that he should leave the house and his children in order to remarry another woman. We shall deal with this aspect again in terms of marriage.

II. Principle of Descent and Succession

Previously I have mentioned the *kpoh*, the matrilineal kin group with a common great grandmother. This is not, however, an institutional corporate descent group. The most important functional descent unit is called *iing*. The *iing* is the lowest order of clan segmentation, smaller than the *kpoh*—a *kpoh* may include two or more *iing*. The generation depth of an *iing* is usually two to four, in some cases an *iing* is formed only by mother and child. The Khasi consider this unit to be the most important social index for the classification of individuals. Marriages are arranged by individual *iing*, not by wider groups of kinsmen. The *iing* is the structurally significant norm. The term *iing* is also used for a house building itself, as is the *noh* of the Garo. However, the membership of the *iing*, as I shall

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR? Khasi AR?

592 The Khasi domestic unit (co-residential group) can be divided into four categories:

1. Households consisting of wife, husband and their children, wife's unmarried sisters and brothers—sometimes including widowed or divorced.
2. [613] Households including all members of an ieng (excluding their spouses from members of 1). In this type, larger households contain all the descendants of three or more generations from one woman (in this case, an ieng corresponds to a kpoh).
3. [591] Households of intermediate type between 1 and 2. Husbands are supposed to live in their wife's house, but they often go back to their sister's house for meals, and sometimes sleep there. They are supposed to work in their wife's field but they might work in their mother's (sister's) field, if necessary. This tendency is especially strong among newly married couples before they have a child.
4. Households consisting of only one elementary family. This rarely happens where a man married a non-Khasi.

Most Khasi households are of types 1, 3 and 4 and these three types are usually found within one village. They were found in the four villages in which I worked. It is to these dwelling units that I have given the name of house in Lists 6 and 9. Category 2, according to
• [178] the information of Khasis and Jaintias, was used to be found among the Jaintias, though nowadays such cases are rapidly decreasing, changing into forms 1, 3 and 4. The members of category 2 belong to an ieng, which structurally corresponds to the *lawsuit* of the Nayar and the *purvi* of the Minangkabau.

178 Category 2 may have been practised among certain of the Khasi a long time ago. Kongton people said that as recently as their father's 184 generation, there were many husbands who stayed at the mother's 591 house after their marriage and visited the wife at night. Nowadays visiting husbands are very unusual cases in the Khasi Hills, though such situations may occur among newly married couples before they have children. Gurdon, who wrote his book *The Khasis* in 1914, states:

> "Amongst the Khasis, after one or two children are born, and if a married couple get on well together, the husband frequently removes his wife and family to a house she and her husband past their savings, which are expended for the support of the family" (p. 76).

In the Khasi Hills, the transition period between duolocal residence and neolocal or uxorilocal residence seems to have been shortened during the last forty or fifty years. This might have been effected through the influence of Christian marriages, which start cohabitation of the wife and the husband immediately after the marriage ceremony. However, in Jaintiapur whose inhabitants originated in the Jaintia Hills where duolocal marriage is the usual practice, there are even now many instances of a man staying at his mother's house for several

years after his marriage. During this period he works in his wife's field, then, if the couple gets on well, they start to live together in an independent house (non-heiress's case) or in the wife's house (heiress's case). In spite of the fact that the inhabitants are all Christians, they have retained this custom.

It is difficult to determine at what date the Khasi people have changed from duolocal marriage to uxorilocal marriage. However, the present dwelling unit, with its fluid relationship between husband and wife (in fact, there are many cases of category 3), suggests a structure linked with the duolocal residence pattern. The fragmentary historical information available and the present Khasi residence pattern suggest that the duolocal arrangement may be an older pattern of marriage. When I was in Kongkon there was no husband who stayed at his mother's house permanently, visiting his wife at night. The head man told me that, when he married, there were many who did not stay in the wife's house. He was the first person to settle in the wife's house. In his case, he said, he felt sympathy for his wife who had no brother who could work for her. After he had settled in his wife's house, many villagers began to follow his example.[1] When the pattern of a visiting marriage was in vogue, a village must have constituted a more compact endogamous unit. If the husband's house was in another village, a visiting marriage must have been a great inconvenience. The tendency to settle in the wife's house and work for the wife's house must have brought about a wider range of marriage contracts, such as with members of nearby villages, even though in the present form of marriage, village endogamy is much preferred as it is decidedly advantageous particularly for a husband, since he can continue his life in the same familiar environment in spite of uxorilocal marriage.

The variations in the pattern of co-residential grouping, which I have classified into four categories, reflect two different themes in the social structure of the Khasi. On the one hand they represent different stages in the maturity of the individual families concerned. For example, a householder who starts in category 3 or 4 may end as an old man in category 1. On the other hand these variations also reflect the polar opposition between the obligations of matrilineal kinship and the obligations of parenthood; a man, in particular, has conflicting obligations towards the ring of his sister and the ring of

1. However, all the information which I collected in the extant Khasi villages that the uxorilocal residence pattern has been practised for a long time. According to stories often told by the Kongkon people, they migrated from the Jaintia Hills. If these accounts are to be taken as a reflection of the real history of their migration, it would seem that the Kongkon people may have kept up the Jaintia custom including the duolocal residence pattern up to recent times, while the majority of the Khasi practised uxorilocal marriage.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

Thus, the marriage of a non-heiress and a man of authority also produces an unstable position for the husband in spite of his having an independent household. Therefore, the possibility of a really stable marriage is even more limited; it will occur only in the match of a non-heiress and a non-authority of the *sing*. But even these marriages cannot be free from the influence of a matrilineal social structure: the man of authority of the wife's *sing* may visit these couples now and then, curb the husband's power and remind both partners of the orientation towards the matri-kin, the *sing*, though this pressure is insignificant in comparison with that experienced by the heiress's family. Likewise, a husband now and then visits his youngest sister's house, *ka sing* are. These constant matrilineal contacts offer husbands chances of escaping from even the slightest matrimonial tension. Whenever a Khasi man feels uneasiness, he will return to his sister's house rather than face a difficult situation with his wife. This tendency is maximized especially on the occasion of religious ceremonies, when all individuals are grouped around each *sing*.

It is apparent that the rules of the *sing* as the underlying structural pattern, function throughout the various categories of domestic unit of the Khasi community as the most important intrinsic force.

VII. POLYGYNY

After this long attempt at the structural analysis of marriage, I think one can theoretically predict what is the situation of polygyny among the Khasi. The theoretical framework elaborated through preceding discussions can also be tested by the empirical data in terms of polygyny.

Nowadays, the Khasi feel so strongly against polygyny that they have no knowledge even that they ever practised it. Many Khasi, of more sophisticated areas, did not believe my findings on polygyny in Jaiñtiyaḥ and Khyrim. I think this is due to the rapid Christianization of the Hills during the last hundred years. My interpreter, though he was not Christian, said to me in the village, "it is most regrettable to bring you to a village where we find polygyny." However, one of the ministers of the Church State to which the two villages belong, told me that there was no particular opposition to polygyny, though recent Christian influence gave people the idea that it was a shameful custom, and he mentioned the case of a polygynist in his area, a man who had recently died, who had had ten wives. In Jaiñtiyaḥ whose inhabitants are all Christian, and in Shella where there has been much contact with, and influence by, Hindus, there were

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

no polygynists, though there were many personal temporary illicit relations or love affairs.

It is true that even in interior villages polygyny is rapidly decreasing. In the two villages I found only two cases of polygyny: a man with two wives in Sohkynduh (Josio in List 6, whose wives are 26 and 32), and a man with three wives in Kongton (Jubongrai in List 9, whose wives are 8, 40 and 52). These cases appeared clearly as cases of polygyny which the villagers recognized as such, speaking of them quite differently from the way they would have spoken of lovers, calling them wives and husbands. Of course, the first wife socially outranks the secondary wives, as *ka iyngo iwai*, and the term *ka iyngo kak* is used for the latter, as Gurdon states (1914, p. 80). The difference being that the first wife has a legal marriage ceremony while the others have not—*ka iyngo kak* means literally 'stolen wife.' About the marriage ceremony, Gurdon gives a detailed discription (*ibid.*, pp. 127-130) and says there are three forms of marriage ceremonies, *Pynkiarsyngat*, *Lamdok* and *Iadih-kiad*. The first and second forms are considered the more respectable; the last one is resorted to by the very poor who cannot afford the greater expense entailed by the first two. Unfortunately, during my stay in these villages, no marriage ceremony took place, but villagers described to me what seems to be the *Iadih-kiad*, where only a fowl is sacrified, and the whole procedure is much simpler than that described by Gurdon. However, whatever the complexity and richness may be, there is a distinct line between having a ceremony and not having it, and this draws the distinction between the status of the first wife and that of the secondary wives.

Nevertheless, this distinction has more of a social bearing than the legal bearing it has in a patrilineal system. Since they follow the matrilineal system, the legal distinction between the first wife and the secondary wife does not affect their children's status and their property rights, at least not in the villages where I worked. The children's social locus is determined by their mother. The children (particularly the youngest daughter) have the right to inherit their father's acquired property which is automatically under their mother's ownership. If the polygynist father has acquired property by working their mother's field, or in trading on behalf of their mother, whether she be the first wife or the second, this property undoubtedly belongs to the children of that wife, not to the first wife alone. The father's physical locus at the time of his economic realizations is the decisive factor.

The Khasi polygynist, without bringing his wives into one household, alternates his residence among them, in turn or according to his temper. This practice is similar to that of the Toubou described by Goodenough (1952, p. 103), and quite different from that of the Garo

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

[Shella]

621 (7) Mawrongkhong, (8) Rynsong-kanor, and (9) Sholap, as shown in Map 9.
103 In Shella village the number of households in each section ranges between 10
and 80. Such a section is called *kher*, and was supposed to be the site of house-
614 holds of segments of every *kur* (clan). It seems that Shella village was once
621 composed of nine different *kur* which could intermarry with each other. However,
nowadays, each section, as appeared in my census, has nothing to do with the
• 178 *kur* as such; it is simply a geographical section. According to the information
731 which I gathered, there had been a tendency for the same *kur* people to gather
within the section, before the great earthquake in 1897 brought considerable

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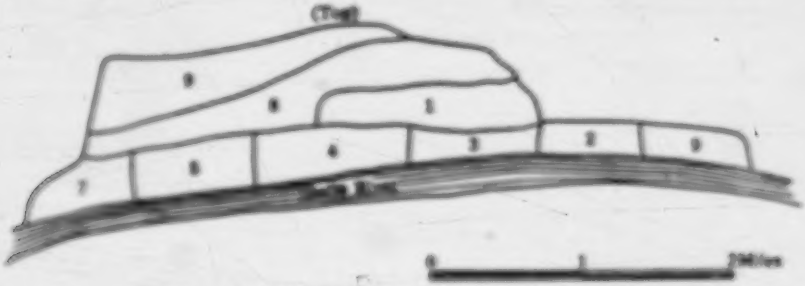

MAP 9. — *Distribution of Sections in Shella Village.*

damages and death to this area: many of them left the village at the time and many houses changed their sites in the village when they were reconstructed.
614 For instance, the composition of Jaair section in January 1956 was as follows:
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Name of kur	*Number of houses*	*Name of kur*	*Number of houses*
1. Vuchyne	7	9. Lyngkhi	1
2. Jaiaw	4	10. Riang	1
3. Lawit	4	11. Nongtathiang	1
4. Synrem	3	12. Lohi	1
5. Kmieng	3	13. Kanto	1
6. Nongkat	3	14. Kanti	1
7. Siem	1	15. Kheiwa ?	1
8. Jaiaw	1	16. ?	3
		Total	40

178 The people said that in Jaair, the Vuchyne was the most influential *kur*,
621 and must have been the original *kur* in this section. However, no clan solidarity
614 could be observed. These seven households were socially and economically quite independent of each other, as are all other households. As a whole, the importance of *kur* diminished a great deal in this village. Five households in Jaair were reluctant to mention their *kur*; some of them did not care about their *kur*; others were not themselves certain to which *kur* they belonged. The *kur* is losing its function to a great extent. This can be ascribed to the high degree of sophistication and mobility. However, except for one Siem woman who came from the uplands and married a man of this village, all 15 *kur* mentioned above are local clans frequently found within the Shella Confederacy. In
621 this area also community endogamy was predominant. Perhaps the Shella

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

Shella

Confederacy forms a more marked endogamous community, through being cut off geographically and economically from the rest of the Khasi, and socially from the neighbouring Hindu people.

The Economy and the People.

Shella lies along the upper part of the Shella River and stretches upwards along the steep slope, looking down towards the Bengal plain. The climate of this part of the hills is considered to be one of the worst in tropical India for human habitation. The Bengal plain, though warmer than this area, is considered more healthy. This border land is the zone of malaria, typhoid, black fever, cholera, etc. None of the Bengalee peasants dare to live in such an area. However, it is the most fertile for products such as betel-nuts, pan-leaves, oranges, bananas and pineapples, and it also produces limestone. These people seem to prefer to settle in this zone and to enjoy its prosperity, at the expense of human lives: every year, especially between March and September, the inhabitants suffer from various fevers and dysentry and other diseases, many of the weaker facing death.

Before the Partition of India and Pakistan, the products of Shella were carried down the Shella River to Sylhet, one of the biggest centres in East Bengal, which brought unimaginable wealth to the Shella people. Their houses were built by carpenters from Sylhet. The style and structure of these houses were exceptionally elaborate for the Khasi. They purchased vast rice fields on the plain, which used to be cultivated by Bengalee and Garo labourers engaged by them. These Khasi do not themselves know how to cultivate rice fields; they have always been managers or landowners. Their boys used to be sent to high schools and colleges in Sylhet. As a result of their trading with the Bengalee, many of them read and speak fluent Bengalee. There is no difference between their style of clothing and that of the Bengalee, though the women maintain their traditional dress in the Shella style.

They have thus been distinguished from the rest of the Khasi not only geographically, but also economically and culturally. Their personality also differs sharply from the rest of the Khasi. They are very sociable, and quick, a quality lacking among the Khasi of Sohkyndub and Kongton. They are clever enough to deal with strangers. The upland Khasi say Shella people are very cunning. This remark shows one side of these people. They had to be cunning, since they traded with the Sylhet Bengalee who were said to be the most cunning of their race. Their role in the trade and in the history of the modernization of the Hills was considerable. For centuries they represented intellectual Khasi owing to their contact with Hindu civilization, while the Hills remained in darkness. They assumed an important role when the British established an administration in the Hills, and even up to now, many leading Khasi originated from this area: for instance, Lati Hat, the first interpreter of the British Headquarters at Cherrapunjee; Jaobon Roy, who was the first Magistrate among the Khasi; Mohum Sing, a lawyer and Member of the Legislative Assembly (the grandson of Jaobon Roy); Nicholls Roy, Minister of Health and Prisons of the Assam Government, Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Missionary of the Church of God; R. R. Thomas (brother of Nicholls Roy), Principal of the Gauhati University, etc.

Through constant cultural contact with Hindu, and encouraged by their economic prosperity, the Shella Khasi, like the Jaintias, have been much influenced by Hindu culture. However, this does not mean that the people of Shella adopted the Hindu beliefs. Though there is a small Hindu shrine, and some ceremonial elements were borrowed from the Hindu, most of the

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

621 descent grouping are often different. This is a very similar pattern to the
[184] mobility which I discussed in Sohkynduh and Kongton (see p. 112).

One of the outstanding features in this community is the strong paternal
• 178 authority, established especially in the first generation, because the father's
593 (husband's) contribution was very important in such circumstances: their
61 domestic units were completely independent from the *iing* either of husband
621 or wife. Some of them came with their wives, and many younger ones and their sons brought their wives from their homeland afterwards, thus practising virilocal marriage.

They have an interesting social usage which reflects the importance of the husband of the first generation. This is the addition of the name of the husband of the first generation to the matrilineal clan name in order to differentiate each particular descent group established at Jatinga within the same clan. For instance, Rupsi-Tah, Rupsi-Loh, Rupsi-Khla and Rupsi-Lati are found in the Rupsi clan. Rupsi-Tah is one of the lines of the first immigrants to Jatinga, which I have mentioned as Rupsi: Tah was taken from Pryntah, the husband of Sintu (Rupsi) (see p. 171). Thus the present inhabitants of Jatinga are very conscious of their father or grandfather, though they strictly follow the matrilineal descent rule. From such a usage of naming a clan, the Indian officer, who gave me some information about Jatinga before I went there, made the mistaken deduction that they had changed from matrilineal to patrilineal, assuming this to have come about as a result of the influence of patrilineal tribes around Jatinga. But this is simply due to the fact, firstly, that they hold in high regard the man of the first generation, because of his great contribution; secondly, that they distinguish themselves from members of the same clan according to the descent group established at each immigration; in other words, it indicates each *iing* grouping in the village.

178 The fundamental Khasi social organization based on the matrilineal system
184 did not change at all. I could observe in Jatinga exactly the same principle
582 in action as I had found in Sohkynduh and Kongton. The village endogamy
61 has also been well established in the present generation: there are about 20 dif-
621 ferent clans which can intermarry, and taking a spouse from an outside community has become very rare nowadays. Marriage patterns in relation to the *iing* structure and all its related aspects are surprisingly similar to that of the communities in the Khasi Hills. The solidarity of the *iing* is even greater in Jatinga, particularly among the rich, because of the greater accumulation of wealth and greater economic activity, which also increases the authority of the *iing* as manager of considerable property—this was also the case with the Shella people. Jatinga demonstrates that in spite of colonization and of a significant change in economic activities, Khasi social organization has maintained itself intact. This situation is in contrast with the considerable social changes observed among the Garo community in colonial areas like Rimsburi and Jowhipara.

621 *Intermarriage*
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582 From the earliest period of the establishment of Jatinga up to the present,
563 some changing aspects of marriage patterns relating to intermarriages are to be observed.

As I stated before, in the earlier period, the people used to bring their spouses from their homeland, but they also married neighbouring tribal peoples, namely,
563 the Zemi-Naga, the Kuki and the Cachares of villages close to Jatinga, and
621 also the Lushai, the Bengalee, the Moslem and the Anglo-Indian who lived in Haflong, the biggest political and commercial centre in the Hills, situated

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

three miles away from Jatinga. As one may expect in such a situation, quite a number of intermarriages with these peoples appear in my census of Jatinga. The resultant of these intermarriages was that when the couple and their children lived in Jatinga, they were considered to have become Khasi; otherwise they were held to be non-Khasi, whether the spouse was man or woman. This orientation of social recognition of the result of intermarriage was generally seen among Khasi in such situations, not only in the case of Jatinga.

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The following are extracts of intermarriages from my genealogical table of Jatinga people.

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A. Cases of intermarriages in which the descendants became Khasi.

1. A woman of the Dome clan married a Kuki man. All members of the present Dome clan at Jatinga are their descendants.
2. A woman of the Rymbai clan married a Kuki man as her second marriage. Their descendants are Rymbai.
3. A man of the Suchiang clan married a Mikir woman, and lived in Jatinga. They had one daughter who married a man of the Hua clan of Jatinga. They named this woman's line 'Shadap' as one of the Khasi clans. Later this Mikir woman's sister's daughter married a man of Rupsi-Lati, and their descendants were also named 'Shadap' by the villagers. Thus Shadap clan was created by a Mikir woman who married a Khasi man of Jatinga.
4. A Khasi man married a Lushai woman and lived at Aijal, the headquarters of the Lushai Hills. They said he became Lushai. Later a man of the Pajat clan of Jatinga married his daughter from Aijal. This couple lives at Jatinga and has several children. The villagers said they have to give them a new clan name. It is under consideration.

B. Cases of intermarriages leading to the emigration of Jatinga inhabitants.

5. A man of Jatinga married a woman of Zemi-Naga as his second marriage and lives at his wife's village.
6. A woman (the daughter of the woman of Rymbai, who married a Kuki: A-2) married a Moslem man and lives at Haflong.
7. A woman of Rymbai married a Punjabee and lives at Shillong. This woman is (B-6)'s mother's sister's daughter.
8. A woman of Siangbai clan married an Assamese and lives at Gauhati.
9. A woman of Rupsi-Tah married an Anglo-Indian and has gone to the United Provinces.
10. A woman of Jatinga married a man of Zemi-Naga and went to his village.
11. A woman of Jatinga married a man of Cacharee and lived at his village some time, but she came back to Jatinga after divorcing him.

A cases belong to the earlier period when Jatinga had a shortage of population, while *B* cases, except 10 and 11, are found among the present younger generation. The population, which had increased rapidly in the last twenty years with economic prosperity, is suffering from the recent economic depression caused by the Partition as well as from the great damages done to their orange gardens and pan-leaf gardens by tree diseases. Moreover they have an unbalanced rate of birth according to sex: females are more numerous than males. Therefore, many daughters marry out as shown in the cases of *B*. The above-cited cases are only concerned with intermarriages with non-Khasi, but there are still other women who married Khasi men and who reside outside Jatinga, as for example, at Haflong and Shillong. [161]

In the village there are still many unmarried girls without suitable spouses. In the olden days, it was less difficult to marry neighbouring tribal peoples. 178 • 563 621

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

like the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki. But after the period of economic prosperity as I shall describe in the next section, the Jatinga people reached a rather high level of education, while most of the neighbouring tribes remained illiterate. Their standard of living likewise improved. Fashionable girls of Jatinga who have studied at the Convent school in Shillong, and speak English and Hindi, cannot marry half-naked tribesmen who work in the jungle. They prefer to intermarry with Moslem, Panjabee or Assamese who belong to amore sophisticated community, and through whom they can enjoy urban life. Thus the orientation of the intermarriage of the people of Jatinga has changed, along with the growth of Jatinga.

It should be noted that intermarriages came mostly through the contacts at Haflong, where people used to go once a week for the bazaar, rather than through direct contacts with neighbouring villages.

Economy of Jatinga and its Relation to Neighbouring Tribes.

It is very interesting to find two different kinds of economy in the same ecological background: Jatinga Khasi practise pan-leaf and orange cultivation and depend mainly on a trading economy, while the other neighbouring tribal peoples practise jhum cultivation, almost a subsistence economy. This situation has remained unchanged for the last fifty years since the establishment of Jatinga village.

The first Jatinga immigrants occupied one ridge of the mountain where the present Jatinga is situated. Formerly, this land belonged to the Zemi-Naga, one of the old inhabitants of the Cachar Hills, who possessed a vast jungle area for jhum cultivation. It seems that there was no objection to the Khasi occupying this small spot: it was apparently too small an area for the jhum cultivator —pan-leaf cultivation of the Khasi requires less than one twentieth of the land of the usual jhum cultivation. The Khasi who started pan-leaf cultivation were able to accumulate some capital, and after several years they started orange gardens. They had had experience of orange cultivation in their homeland, but this was the first time they had operated commercially.

The success of this orange cultivation was beyond their dreams. Hearing of good oranges at Jatinga, many Bengalee merchants from Dacca, Sylhet, Silchar and Gauhati began to come to buy them. Moreover, the village had the great advantage of being situated near the railway station. Oranges were sold by carloads. Unimaginable wealth came to the Jatinga people. Especially the founder's family, including his brother's and sister's, became extraordinarily wealthy; their income used to be Rs. 20,000 a year. The children were sent to the school which was established in the village and some were educated at colleges in Dacca, Sylhet and Shillong. The villagers had beautiful houses built by Manipuri and Bengalee carpenters. Actually the houses of Jatinga were known as some of the best construction in Assam.

Like the Sheila people, they were managers of gardens and employed workers. Wealthy households used to engage several labourers annually, most of them from Jaintia where the Jatinga people had originated. These workers were provided with shelter in the servant quarters of their employer's house, but they had to provide meals for themselves. They were paid daily according to the work done. They were available to other households, when their employer had no work. Some labourers were also engaged locally among the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki, though not as many as among the Jaintia. These local tribes were fairly well occupied by their jhum cultivation, and not used to being employed as workers. Therefore, most of them were not regular

pendable water supply. Villages are about two to five miles apart, and have no boundary markers. In the past, villages contained semipublic buildings and grounds: the home of the village priest (also the home of a chief if he resided in that village), the village marketplace, and tree groves, cremation grounds, or other awesome spots that were believed to be inhabited by supernatural beings. Villages today may have also one or more Christian churches, government social welfare buildings, and schools. Formerly, villages were entered through a guarded gateway; this is no longer the case, and paths feed into villages from all directions. Often several villages are nucleated into one large unit, named and also described as a "village." These were once defense units, but were so uncohesive otherwise that institutionalized rivalry obtained among the component villages. Now, they have been integrated through the agency of all-village public services, especially schools. **Housing.** The traditional Khasi house is entered through a door at the rounded end of a U-shaped ground plan, and is about 20 feet at widest extent; it is about 30 feet deep, and is elliptical or hogback in profile. Its walls are of stone blocks cemented with mud. The roof of grass thatch, supported by a bamboo frame, overhangs the walls on their outside, down to about three feet above the ground. The house is divided into two parts: the front one-third is on the ground level, floored either with stone blocks or tamped earth, and is used for storage of occupational instruments and as a shelter for poultry. The rear two-thirds is raised four feet on piles of stone blocks to a platform of planks, and is partitioned into six rooms, comprising a kitchen, areas for storage of food and water, and sleeping quarters. Furniture is minimal, and the house is totally undecorated. There are no windows, and no smoke vents. A house generally has a companion shed, walled of wood and grass matting and thatched with grass. This serves as a pigsty, but it may be partitioned also to house cows, and it may have a loft for fuel storage. Compounds often contain garden plots, and are fenced around with stone or bamboo and mud. Nowadays, the traditional house has given way to Western-style bungalows of wood and tin, especially in and around Shillong. [Cf. Mukherjee et al. 1941.]

ECONOMY. The Khasi economy is a market economy based on agriculture, and most Khasis are primary producers, sellers, middlemen, and/or providers of services in connection with markets. Khasis are often multioccupational: they produce goods for partial subsistence, and also play some part in trade. **Agriculture.** On the Shillong plateau, the major field crops are potatoes, maize, millets, and dry rice, still produced mostly through swidden farming, with a two- to three-year period of fallow, but increasingly through continuous use of a single field with the aid of ma-

nure and chemical fertilizers. Both level land and hillsides are cultivated by the same hand techniques: 3 × 6-foot patches are fashioned with walkways between, sods are overturned within the patches and allowed to dry, the soils are burned slowly and the ashes spread over the soil, and finally the seed is sown, either broadcast or sunk with the aid of the typical Khasi hoe. The coldest part of the upland enjoys a two-crop year, and Khasis often double crop as well. Paddy has long been found in the lowlands, in parts of Jaintia and Bhoi, the only places where the plow is found. Nowadays paddy is more and more seen in the uplands, together with a simple teracing and irrigation technology. Many upland Khasis have house gardens in which they raise a wide variety of vegetables, including pumpkins, cabbage, radishes, sweet potatoes, eggplant, and many others. Important crops in Bhoi country are paddy rice, lac, caoutchouc, cotton, bananas, and pineapples; in War, they are betel nut, pan leaf, oranges, and sugar cane. **Fishing and hunting.** Fishing is done by poisoning streams, but this is a subsistence activity only in the southern foothills. Hunting was formerly by bow and arrow or by traps, including spring guns and pitfalls, but was always primarily a sport. [Cf. Stegmiller 1925.] **Gathering.** Khasis once gathered about 150 species of wild plants, most of them for food, but some for medicine. Thrifty villagers still gather food plants, but there is no real dependence on gathering. Medicinal plants continue to be very important. **Domestic animals.** Fowl, goats, pigs, and cattle are bred both for meat and sacrifice. Milk was formerly not utilized, but is now so popular that specialists keep herds of milch cows. Pigs are used as village scavengers, but some also receive prepared food. Cattle and goats forage freely in the fields during the winter, but are herded by a communally hired herdsboy during the agricultural season. Most households keep chickens, primarily for their eggs, and a few keep ducks. A few horses are also seen. Dogs are pariahs, except for hunting dogs. Cats are popular. **Food and stimulants.** The staple food of Khasis is boiled rice, together with the dried fish which is imported from Sylhet. Boiled beef, pork, and chicken are relished, but beyond the means of most. Meals are taken twice a day, in the morning and evening, although farmers also take a midday meal in the field, and others may take tea and cold sweet potatoes or rice bread. Certain foods are taboo to certain sibs. Stimulants are extremely common, especially betel nut, which is often accompanied by a bit of tobacco. Tobacco is also smoked as cigarettes and in hookah and other pipes. Every village has one or more household taverns, where distilled rice whiskey is cooked and sold by the glass and by the bottle. Imported opium had spread widely in the malarious Bhoi country, but controls instituted in the 1940s have been fairly successful. All stimulants were once taken by men, women, and

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16: McCormack E-4,5 (1956-1958) 1964
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children, but Christian influence has eradicated or driven underground the consumption by women and children. **Industrial arts.** The only industrial arts traditionally practiced in all households were a rudimentary carpentry and a simple utilitarian basketry. Other arts were few, and were practiced as village specialties: the washing and smelting of iron ore and the forging of hoes, daos, knives, swords, and cooking pots (upland Khasis); the spinning of cotton thread (Mynso village, Jaintia); the dyeing of cotton thread and the weaving of cloth (Jaintias, Bhois, Lyngngams, Wars); the spinning and weaving of Eri silk (Khyrwang and Nongtung villages, Bhoi and Jaintia); and the hand manufacture, without wheel, of painted earthenware pots (Larnai village, Jaintia). Ironworking and the production of cotton goods have nearly died out through the competition of machine-made goods. Carpentry has greatly improved. An innovation of major importance is the sewing and tailoring, on sewing machines, of ready-made garments for both sexes. [Cf. Darrah 1896; C., W. 1832.] **Trade.** Khasi villages normally contain a number of household shops operated by women. Every Khasi also lives within walking distance of several village markets that are held on successive days of the eight-day week. The limits of market intercourse for the members of any particular village can be roughly distinguished by their naming the days of their week, which are called after the active markets. The exception is the huge market at Shillong, much of which is active daily, and which serves as a magnet for Khasis from all over the hills. The traditional barter has given way to currency in all markets. The small ones contain at least some local farm produce, plus other essentials like betel nut, and the food and tea stalls which serve as centers of social intercourse. The big markets contain not only regional produce and manufactures but also products from distant parts of the hills, brought for sale by traveling middlemen. There is also substantial trade, from the hills to the valleys, in potatoes, pears, hides, lac, cotton, caoutchouc, the wood of the sal tree, Eri silk thread, limestone, coal, ivory, bay leaf, betel nut, pan leaves, bananas, sugar cane, oranges, til, turmeric, and chilies. From the plains to the hills, there is trade in dried fish, paddy rice, salt, cooking oil, kerosene, matches, tea, sugar, wheat flour, machine-made cloth, shoes, metal pots, crockery, porcelain objects, coral beads, silver, and gold. Markets are important not only as economic institutions but also as centers for recreation (including archery competitions), courtship, reaffirmation of kinship ties with distant relatives, and the dissemination of information of all kinds. [Cf. Stegmiller 1924a.] **Division of labor.** Men do the heavy work, such as clearing and burning the swidden fields, caring for cattle and goats and driving them to market, butchering and selling large cuts of beef and pork, carpentry and mining, and driving and laboring on motor vehicles. They also tailor men's

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clothing, operate the large Khasi business establishments in Shillong, and provide all civic and religious leadership. Women care for children and for the home, do the marketing, and sell dried fish, betel nut, lime, fruits, and rice breads at markets. Other tasks can be performed by either sex. **Land tenure.** Land was formerly divided into sib land and public domain. Sib land was corporately held in perpetuity, and was inalienable except by the unanimous consent of all members of the sib. The public domain was subject to usufructuary right by anyone who kept the land regularly under habitation or cultivation, with a lapse of no more than three years. Most villages grew up on public domain, and then reckoned all land inhabited or under cultivation by a village member as village land. Forests were public, except for sacred groves possessed by villages or lineage groups, and everyone was free to gather branches for fuel. Wastelands and streams were also public. By now, most public domain and village land, together with its forest cover, has been pre-empted as private property and is being rented and sold as such. Sib lands remain intact, unless the sibs agree to rent, lease, or sell. [Cf. Cantlie 1934.]

KIN GROUPS. **Descent.** Descent is matrilineal, and the Khasi is a member exclusively of his own matrilineage from birth to death. Adoption, which is very rare, is only within the matrilineage. **Kin groups.** The maximal matrilineage is the sib; this is a named, widely dispersed, strictly exogamous, lineage group, which claims but cannot trace its origin from a single ancestress. Sibs used to meet as corporate groups from time to time. Some sibs are linked with others in large amorphous groups that are unnamed and are defined solely by exogamy. Such a group is composed of two or more sibs, the ancestresses of which are claimed to have been either real sisters or dear friends who out of affection declared that thenceforth their descendants would be as consanguineals. The origin and function of sib-linkage is now unknown, and today the members of a sib will often disagree on whether or not their sib is linked with another. • The minimal matrilineage is the local descent group, or *ïing*. This is the largest kin group that normally rallies at life crises. It is said that the *ïing* formerly spanned six generations; today, it encompasses only four. If an *ïing* grows to more than four generations in a single village, it segments. New houses are located at some distance from the old and the *ïing* soon forgets exactly how to trace genealogical connection, except for which segment descended from a youngest sister. The term *ïing* may also be applied to an extended family, an elementary family, and a house. The elementary family is the basic domestic unit in Khasi society. In any village there are likely to be one or two households which stand as male local representatives of the lineage of the female household head. Such a household is known as an

ing from the time it consists of an elementary family until it grows to a local descent group four generations deep. [Cf. Chattopadhyay 1941.] **Kin terminology.** The terms of address given below are also terms of reference except where otherwise indicated, and are uniform for male and female speakers. They were collected in an upland Khasi village near Shillong (cf. Ehrenfels 1953 for some regional variants).

Fa	*pa*
Mo	*mei*
FaElBr	*pasan*
FaYoBr	*pakhynnah*
FaSi	*kha*
Fa youngest Si	*khaduh*
MoElSi	*meisan*
MoYoSi	*meinah*
Mo youngest Si	*meiduh*
MoElBr	*mama, kni*
MoYoBr	*bah* (ref.: *kni*)
ElBr	*bah khynnah*
Eldest Br	*kong bah*
YoBr	*bah deng*
Youngest Br	*bah duh*
ElSi	*deng*
Eldest Si	*lud, kong*
YoSi	*lud nah, lud rit*
Youngest Si	*khatduh*
MoSiSo, MoSiDa	*para* (ref.: *para ar kmie*)
FaBrSo, FaBrDa	*para* (ref.: *parakha*)
MoBrSo, MoBrDa, FaSiSo, FaSiDa	*bakha*

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY. **Mode.** According to the traditional courtship pattern, a group of young male relatives and friends made nightly visits to the house of some virgin girl in another village, appraising her through banter while she and her parents appraised them, and staying the night to avoid the dark walk home. Marriage was according to the wishes of the parents after negotiation by a go-between from the boy's side. Girls might be 15, and boys 17, years of age. Girls have now acquired freedom of movement through attending school, however. Premarital sexual play is common, and young people choose their own spouses when the girl is about 19 and the boy 21. The most common mode of marriage is elopement, for Christians and non-Christians alike, but some Christians marry in church, and some Khasis still marry according to the traditional ceremony or some variation on it. There are no preferred or prescribed marriage types, nor is there a bride price or dowry. **Form.** Monogamy is the ideal for all. **Extension of incest taboos.** Sibs are exogamous. Other prohibited marriage partners are real and classificatory FaSi and FaBr, FaBrCh, FaMo, and FaMoMo. The MoBrWi is also prohibited. Boy

says that the MoBrCh but not the FaSiCh is prohibited (1897: 2), but Gurdon says that the MoBrCh is eligible after the death of MoBr, and that FaSiCh is eligible after the death of Fa (1907: 78). Nowadays both types of marriage occur, whether the linking relative is living or dead. **Residence.** Residence is either duolocal or matrilocal under the roof of the wife's mother until the birth of one or two children. For a man married to a youngest daughter, it then continues to be matrilocal. For men married to other daughters, it becomes uxorilocal; there have also always been cases of virilocal residence, and it is now common to find neolocal residence in Shillong. For non-Christian Jaintias, it is duolocal throughout the marriage. **Domestic unit.** The domestic unit is the elementary family, though for a youngest daughter it may temporarily include also her aged mother, aged father, unmarried siblings, or divorced or widowed brothers. **Inheritance.** Traditionally, after the Khasi mother had helped each of her daughters to build and supply a house when each one married and had children, her only real obligation to help them economically was ended. Everything she possessed, excepting certain personalty that was destroyed in her cremation, was inherited by her youngest daughter. Failing daughters, a woman's property reverted to her next youngest sister's daughter. Today, this pattern is often modified by putting more property into the hands of older daughters and even sons. [Cf. Cantlie 1934; Becker 1924.] **Divorce.** A woman may effect numerous and usually brief separations from her husband by simply closing the door of her house to him, whereupon he returns to the house of his mother or youngest sister. Divorce, however, must be initiated by mutual consent. Divorce is very common, even though women resist it because they do not wish to lose a provider, and men because they do not wish to lose their children. Formerly it was accomplished by a simple ritual in the presence of witnesses, followed by public announcement by a town crier. Now, the witnesses and the public announcement have been dispensed with, and evidence for divorce consists only in the word of the parties concerned.

835 [114] [178]• 591 592 428 [178] 586 586 178

SOCIOPOLITICAL ORGANIZATION. **Political organization.** The basic unit of political organization is the village, which is composed of one or more dominant local descent groups plus several others. Village government is by an assembly of all resident adult males, under the informal chairmanship of a headman elected by them from among their number. The membership of any immigrant household into a village is defined by the participation of the household's males in this assembly. Sustained membership in a village is voluntary. Khasi chiefdoms probably arose out of voluntary associations of villages, which occasionally transferred allegiance from one chief to another.

62 174 619

another. In other words, a state is not a fixed territorial entity. In the early twentieth century, the most populous of the 25 chiefdoms, Khyrim, contained 36,833 persons occupying 7,859 houses in 372 villages, and the least populous, Nonghwai, contained 246 persons occupying 53 houses in 3 villages. Fifteen of the chiefdoms were headed by a *syiem* (chief); three by a *lyngdoh* (priest), six by a *sirdar*, and one by a *wahadadar*. These leaders all had executive and judicial functions, but a chief's authority was limited in that he had to obtain the approval of his executive council before acting. The other leaders were subject to a similar limitation. A chief maintained a small police force. His major sources of revenue were market tolls, fines, and, more recently, income from licenses to distill rice whisky. Succession to a ruling role in the larger states traditionally involved election by members of a lineage that had a hereditary right to elect, from among members of a lineage that had the hereditary right to rule. In British times, the elective basis was broadened, differentially in the various states, even to the point of popular elections. [Cf. Aitchison 1931; Lyngdoh 1962.] Social stratification. The three classes of lineage are the nobles, the commoners, and the slaves or servants. This stratification applies only to the recruitment to office in the native-state system, for there is no hypergamy, and in a village assembly everyone has equal voice. The noble lineages have the hereditary right to fill from among their male members roles such as village or state priest, councilor to a chief, or elector of a chief. The few lineages which today are remembered as slave or servant lineages had the inherited obligation to render special services to a chief's household. There is no Khasi term for "commoner." Every lineage other than a noble or a slave lineage is a commoner lineage, and the commoner lineages are in the majority. Warfare. Warfare was suppressed by the British, and little is known for certain about its traditional forms. The tactics which confronted the British were the ambush and the guerrilla raid. Traditional goals included taking heads from other Khasis and capturing women from the valleys.

RELIGION. Major and indigenous religions. A Welsh Calvinistic Methodist missionary penetrated into Cherrapunji in 1832, and the work that he began continues to this day. His society, which has since become the Welsh Presbyterian Foreign Mission, introduced writing, village primary schools, a high school, a theological seminary, and a hospital. Competing missionaries followed, and by 1914 some Shillong Khasis were puzzling over the tenets not only of traditional Hinduism and Islam but also of the Buddhists, Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, and Unitarians (Roy 1914). By the 1920s missionaries of the Church of God and the Seventh Day Adventists were

household deities, and measles and smallpox deities. Deities of the first two categories are simply aspects of the high God or Goddess. • The earth is peopled with two great orders of land demons and water demons who cause all undesirable, unnatural, and otherwise inexplicable events, acting either on their own or as instruments in the hands of sorcerers. Apart from omens, both in nature and in dreams, Khasis attach supernatural significance also to mystic numbers, and to the colors white, black, and red. They hold especially important folk beliefs regarding betel nut, paddy rice, gold and silver, and clothing.

Practitioners. The two classes of religious practitioners are the village or state priests and the sacrificers. Both are male. They use the same divinatory techniques of reading broken eggshells and the entrails of cocks, and they both sacrifice cocks, hens, goats, pigs, and cattle. Their skills are not taught to them so much as picked up by observation and confirmed by demonstrations of efficacy. A priest is elected from among the men of his sib to direct his skills to the public good until he dies, and his rewards are institutionalized and come from the village or the state. A sacrificer acts for private persons or his groups, on call, and is rewarded by them personally with gifts in cash or in kind. The sacrificer is called upon to explain and then to ritually remedy every variety of misfortune, especially illness, though his powers are nowadays regarded with ambivalence, and he is widely expected to become a sorcerer sooner or later. • There are two major types of sorcerer. One is the ritual specialist or sacrificer who secretly turns his skills from good to evil, manipulating demons to injure a person or his group, and acting always for himself alone out of considerations of jealousy or revenge. The other is normally a leading citizen, a woman who is so wealthy and successful that it is believed that she must keep a thlen, i.e. a creature which will bring her prosperity as long as she feeds it periodically with human blood. To provide this blood, the men of her household, or other males whom she bewitches with a special whisky, will indiscriminately murder anyone except a member of her matrilineage. The Jaintias have an analogue to the thlen in their tiev, except that the ultimate result is death from illness rather than murder. Minor witchcraft can be perpetrated by priests keepers or persons with an evil eye, who are often women. Ceremonies. The important traditional ceremonies were the life-crisis rituals relating to pregnancy and childbirth, the naming of a child, and death. Lesser ceremonies related to marriage and divorce, and to housebuilding. All these rituals were addressed primarily to the ancestors, and they are still performed in modified form by many Khasis. Other rituals, which were performed by groups such as villages, sibs, local descent groups, or households, were addressed to the unnamed aspects of the high

776 777 787 822 824 781 793 764 754 [184] 795 796 797 798 799 800 801 802 803 804 805 806 807 808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834

16: McCormack E-4,5 (1956-1958) 1964
[P. 112 A] AR7 Khasi AR7

God or Goddess, deities regarded as helpful in bringing prosperity, producing fertility, and so on. Rituals of this kind are no longer practiced, except for the Bedingkhlam ceremony designed to protect the Jaintia village of Jowai. Finally, the state religion of many chiefdoms was expressed in one great ceremony per year which was intended to secure ancestral blessing for a chief and his lineage, and, through this, for the entire chiefdom. The notable example, still practiced, is the Pomblang Syiem of Khyrim chiefdom. [Cf. Lyngdoh 1937, 1940, Stogmüller 1954b, Becker 1956.] **Illness and medicine.** In time of illness, a Khasi calls in a sacrificer, and possibly also a medicine man. The medicine man is an ordinary individual who has hit upon some herbal remedy for one or more ailments, who has become famous enough to be sought out and rewarded in cash, and who jealously guards the formula of his medicine until it dies with him. He and his patients tend to regard him as specially blessed. **Soul, death, and afterlife.** The universe is comprised of a heaven, the earth, and the air between. Heaven is where the souls of deceased mortals live in eternal peace, grouped ub by ub. The earth and all nature were created by God, and everything that God created has its own individual soul. There is no other great earth deity, for it was God who created the earth. The air is inhabited by the wandering souls of those dead for whom full death rites were not performed. A Khasi's potentiality for enjoying an afterlife in heaven with his ancestors depends on his receiving proper death rites at the hands of his ub mates. First, his body is cremated by his children, notably his youngest daughter, and his bones are collected and deposited temporarily in a small stone receptacle. All work stops in the village while everyone participates in the funeral. Once every several years, an entire ub gathers to witness the transfer of the bones of recently deceased ub mates from their temporary receptacles to the great ub cairn that is in the keeping of the youngest daughter, descended from the ub ancestress through a line of youngest daughters. This final ceremony covers five days, and is elaborate and expensive, but when an individual's bones are finally resting with those of his antecedents in the cairn, it is understood that his soul is finally in heaven, "resting henri nut in the house of God."

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18: Godwin-Austen G-3 (ca. 1872) 1875 AR7
Khasi AR7

[194] [212] [228]

clans were very much as we find them at the present day among the Nagas and Kukis, beyond and bordering our present extreme limits, viz. that of constant feud. They are now the quietest, most peaceful, and contented of all the hill people on the eastern frontier. [178]

In my former paper I did not allude to the cairns in these hills, which I am inclined to think are works of greater age than the stone structures. The custom is one that certainly has long since been given up, for I could not obtain any satisfactory account of them. They are only to be seen on the southern side of the Khasi plateau, and Dr. Hooker, in his account of his trips to the Kellong Rock, did not fail to notice them. About Mairang and towards Nongstoin they are very numerous, and always stand on commanding situations. On the path leading down the grassy spur to the stone monuments previously described, near Nongkrem, is a very fine large example of a cairn, about eight feet high. They are usually plain hemispherical mounds of earth; but this one is faced all round at the base with slabs of stone about four feet high; they are frequently not higher than six feet. A distant view is shown in Plate iii. [172] [103]

Nowhere is there any trace of the earth that forms them having been excavated close by; it must, therefore, have been carried in some short distance, to avoid unsightly hollows near the structure. I should much like to have dug into one of these cairns, but was afraid to hurt the feelings of the people by doing so. They are very probably cinerarias of an earlier form to those now made of stone, and this point it might be interesting to clear up.

Beyond the Khasi area no cairns are to be found, at least I had never come across any until visiting North Manipur last winter (1872—73), where, at the head of the Imphal river, on the direct road from Sonagoting, are four fine cairns, all faced with large boulders. They are old, and the Nagas now living in the village near said they had been made by another clan of Nagas, who long ago had gone further north, and the site of whose village had been lately re-occupied by Kukis. [114] [101]

Mr. C. B. Clarke, in a paper read lately before your Institute, refers to the different forms of the cinerary in the Khasi Hills; but he has not quite exhausted the subject, or got further than I did, although with regard to the disposal of the ashes of the dead he gives some further interesting particulars. [114]

As I think that drawings are of very great interest, and better exhibit the many different forms of bone depositary or cinerary that have been adopted at different periods by tribes inhabiting localities very far apart, and often quite unconnected ethnically, [26] [64]

19: Assam C-S (1958) 1963 A87 Khasi A87

3.3 **Measures so far taken.**—Since 1947, there has been constant demand from border people for relief and rehabilitation. Government undertook various measures to alleviate their difficulties. Government's attention to border problems has however, not been adequate. The common feeling of border people was that whenever the border problems deteriorated due to some adverse measures adopted by East Pakistan authorities more attention was attracted, on the other hand, when the situation eased comparatively the Government's vigilance also slackened.

The various measures so far adopted by Government in border area, have been fully discussed and commented upon by the Border Rehabilitation Committee. These need no repetition here. But a few points emerging from the grievances put forward by the villagers during our investigation are noted below.

On the question of the schemes linked up with the issue of diversification of agriculture in border area, a large section of the border people skilled in the maintenance and operation of orchards are opposed to the idea of a complete switch over from cash crops to food crops in the cultivation of which they have no adequate experience. Moreover, there is the problem of getting adequate land in the vicinity for wet paddy cultivation. Indeed, having lost the market for some of the cash crops, some cultivators are trying to increase cultivation of paddy and other valuable crops on their own initiative wherever suitable land is available. But the problem of getting adequate funds for reclamation and improvement of land has acted as a serious handicap to them. Financial assistance to the needy and willing cultivators for reclamation works and taking up of more minor irrigation projects is very necessary.

As regards Government loans granted to cultivators, people complained that apart from being inadequate they are often untimely. As a result the people, needy as they are, utilise the amount for meeting their day to day consumption expenses.

There have been complaints that various improved seeds supplied by Government are of very inferior quality leading to waste of time and money of the poor people. The Department of Agriculture should not only check the quality of the seeds before issue but should also see that the seed are properly used by inexperienced cultivators who are newly taking up cultivation of these crops.

With the opening up of a few vital P. W. D. Roads transport of border products to Shillong and other places has greatly been facilitated but the problem of transporting them from remote interiors to the various head points on P. W. D. roads still remains unsolved. While during winter season these places may be negotiated by a man on foot up and down the steep gradients, during rainy seasons these tracks become slippery, the streams and rivulets are overflooded and it becomes impossible for a man to cross them, thus isolating the villages from each other leading to cessation of trade and all other activities between villages. Properly planned and sited schemes for construction of feeder roads and bridges linking up these villages, will, apart from giving some works to the people alleviate much of the difficulties of transportation of agricultural produce.

19: Assam G-S (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7

178 241 waste of time. Chemical fertilisers are found to be used by some cultivators but there is still a large section of cultivators who feel sceptic about the use of fertilisers. There is need of continuation of training and demonstration in the proper use of fertilisers and manures.

The present method of hand threshing of paddy by beating with a stick of wood is a waste of time and labour. There is no reason why threshing cannot be done by using bullocks as in the plains.

21

General area.—

1. Mawphlang	Paddy and maize	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Sweet potato, ginger and cardamom
2. Jowai	Paddy, maize and vegetables	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Do.
3. Byrnihat	Paddy, maize, etc.	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Do.
4. Mawlaiong	Paddy, maize and potato	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Do.
5. Amlarem	Paddy, maize and millet	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Do.
6. Laitryngew	Paddy, maize and millet	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Ginger and betelnuts.
7. Mawkhar	Paddy, potato and maize	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Betelnut.
8. Laptang	Paddy and maize	Oxen, hoes and ploughs	Do.
9. Demseng	Paddy, potato and maize	Oxen and hoes	Do.
10. Jyngkai	Tapioca, sesame, millet and orange.	Oxen and hoes	Do.

This table reveals that in one region there is bias for cash crops and in the other for food crops—more or less depending upon the soil and topography of the regions. Extreme hardship occurs when there is deficiency in food production or a glut in the market of cash crops. The cash crop producers are, of course, trying to adapt their crops to the changing market conditions. With the loss of market for oranges, the people in the border areas are trying to increase their foodgrain production and even cultivating paddy, potatoes, etc. Throughout the district, people are trying to increase wet paddy cultivation. Wherever water is available, they spare no pain to convert it into a wet paddy field. Similarly, increasing interest is evident among the people in the cultivation of valuable crops like black-pepper, cashewnut, etc., which have a good prospect in the border areas. It is felt that there is considerable scope for introduction of cultivation of chillies, turmeric, coffee, etc. But any new endeavour demands heavy initial investment which often is not within the reach of cultivators. Government should continue to advance adequate agricultural loans to the needy cultivators in a better planned manner.

Only 19 out of 38 villages reported use of bullock driven ploughs for wet paddy cultivation. But even in these villages animal power is not universally used. Of course, in the rocky fields people have no alternative to the use of hoes and spades but in some areas particularly in the wet paddy field, bullock driven ploughs may profitably be utilised. It is not that the farmers do not realise the advantage of ploughing but want of funds for purchase of bullocks, etc., is reported to be the cause of discontinuance of the old practice. Both broadcasting and transplanting methods are in vogue in paddy cultivation the latter being a recent introduction is gaining popularity. Some farmers in the project area villages have tried line sowing but according to them it is very laborious and measures to

[illegible] A perusal of the table above will show that proportion of families following non-agricultural labour as principal occupation is highest in Sundar areas. Majority of these families were formerly engaged in agriculture but due to adverse circumstances arising out of Partition, were forced to take to other occupations. The relief works and several R. W. S. works gave employment to a large section of these people. Other avenues of employment are collection and carriage of fuelwood, woodcutting, and rearing of cowfamilies, etc. Thanks to extensive artificial and preserve plantations the bulk of the produce in the Sundar area are bought by displaced persons and the Bengali people concentrated in Khulgachi and Bakar. There are many visitors dealing in fruits, vegetables, fish, chatais and other handicraft. Under employment expenditure, etc., among the Sundar families, landholders, cultivators, etc., Commissioners agents, Educators, Doctors, etc., are shown as others.

5.13 In the following table the families in the three village groups are classified according to their subsidiary occupation.

141 In the interior of the Hills the larger villages are mere clusters of huts. The great majority of the inhabitants are employed in agriculture, but there are no data upon which a proportion of agriculturists to non-agriculturists could be based.

147 There is no immigration into the District. Both the Khásis and the Synteng have succeeded in preserving to the present day their primitive religion, free from the interference of Hinduism. They still maintain their aboriginal forms of belief and religious worship, and repudiate alike the authority of Brâhmans and the entire system of caste. To some extent, however, they have given way to Hindu prejudices in the matter of purity of food. The few Hindus to be found in the Hills are temporary residents, employed in civil and military employ, who always contemplate returning to their own homes. The traders are for the most part natives of the Hills; for the Marwâri merchants, who penetrate into every other corner of Assam, have been able to obtain no footing in the face of Khási competition. There is likewise no emigration from the District. The hillmen are a well-to-do and contented race, and either produce themselves or obtain by trade sufficient to satisfy their every wants. A certain number of both Khásis and Syntengs proceed southwards every year to work on the tea gardens of Cáchár and Sylhet, but such absence from home is only temporary.

241 AGRICULTURE: RICE.—Thirteen different varieties of rice are cultivated in the District, of which the following is a list, giving the Khási name as well as the description of the grain:—(1) *Ri-kyllo-thlyrsiew* (*u*, the masculine article, meaning "the," and *kyllo*, mean monsoon, meaning "paddy"), brown rice with long grain; (2) *u-kyllo-thlyrsiew-lawlih*, a white rice with long grain; (3) *u-kyllo-lo-on*, round-grained rice; (4) *u-kyllo-kwai*, flavoured, husked; (5) *u-kyllo-u-'wait*, 'wait' = 'thin,' long-u 'black'); (6) *u-kyllo-lai-lit*, white rice; (7) *u-kyllo-arie*, scented rice (literally *u-u* "the," *kyllo-u* "paddy," *arieu* "sweet"); (8) *u-kyllo-lo-briuh*, large-grained rice; (9) *u-kyllo-lai-diang*, small-grained rice; (10) *u-kyllo-ar-ka*, early rice; (11) *u-kyllo-ra-dan*, late rice; (12) *u-kyllo-kong-ka*, rice grown along with beans; (13) *u-kyllo-lai-sih*, small rice.

Rice is cultivated in marshy fields situated near running water as well as in high lands. The first seven of the above thirteen species of rice are sown in marshy lands during the months of April and May,

89: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1891 AR? Khasi AR?

record either for food or as articles of trade. A pair of ploughing oxen are worth about Rs. 30, or £2, 4s.; an ordinary cow, Rs. 12, or £1, 4s.; a score of kids six months old, Rs. 18, or £1, 10s.; and a score of full-grown pigs, from Rs. 100 to Rs. 180, or from £10 to £18. 231 435

THE AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS in use in the District consist of a plough, called *kujyiáir* in Khási, and a hoe or *dáhlí*, called *sawkúlai*. When the cultivation is carried on by means of oxen, the plough is used, the hoe alone being used where the land is cultivated by manual labour. In the Khási Hills the use of the plough, except in a few rare cases, is entirely unknown; but in the Jáintia Hills, oxen and ploughs are used to a greater extent. What is technically termed "a plough" of land is equivalent to four English acres; a pair of oxen, together with the necessary implements, would represent a capital of about Rs. 40, or £3. 241 407 [415]

WAGES.—The Deputy-Commissioner reports that the price of labour in the District has never been doubled in the last ten years. The rate obtaining at present are from eighteen to one shilling a day for an ordinary labourer, and from one shilling to eighteen pence a day for a person. An agricultural day labourer earns sixpence, and a woman in the same work fourpence-halfpenny a day. Bricklayers, carpenters, and like-humble earn from a shilling to eighteen pence a day. The new System of Shillong, the present seat of the Local Government, was established in May 1864, and since that time the demand for labour has markedly increased. The extension of the cultivation of pineapples has also had an appreciable effect on the price of labour. 178 469 465 [244]

PRICES OF FOOD GRAINS.—Of the different descriptions of rice in the markets of the District, the better sorts are imported from the neighbouring Districts of Sylhet and Kámrúp. The best produce is considered to only for the use of the Khásis. The price of the 435 439 243

the supplies come. In a decent market like that of Shillong, rice of the best quality generally sells at from 6 to 7 *seers* for the rupee, or from 16s. to 18s. 8d. per cwt.; and rice of inferior quality, which is only used by the poorer classes, at from 9 to 10 *seers* for the rupee, or from 11s. 6d. to 12s. 3d. per cwt. Little or no rice is carried on as unhusked grain. Paddy produced in the District generally sells at an average of from 15 to 18 *seers* per rupee, or from 7s. to 7s. 6d. per cwt. Indian corn, which is only grown to a small extent, is sold

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1997 AR1 Khasi AR1

or Rs. 18/10/00, or £1,810/00, and the revenue derived by Government from the quarries was Rs. 67,000, or £6,700. In addition, the Khasi Chiefs receive a revenue from this source of more than £1,000.

Iron.—The smelting of iron was once the chief industry in the Khasi Hills, and a considerable quantity of the metal used to be exported into Sylhet, both in the crude and the manufactured state. Recently, however, this industry has almost died out, in the face of the competition of the superior article imported from England and sold in the plains at a cheaper rate. The indigenous methods of extracting, washing, and smelting the ore have been minutely described by Professor Oldham. The following description is taken from Mr. Allen's Report, dated 1878, at which date the annual export of smelted iron was estimated at 25,000 maunds, valued at Rs. 87,500, or £8,750, at the rate of Rs. 3 per maund. —"The ore is said to be most abundant and of the best quality in the State of Khyrim, especially at the villages of Nongkrim and Pomyndih. A few iron articles, such as axes or hill knives, dahlis or matchets, spear and arrow-heads, are manufactured by the Khasi smiths in the Hills; but the greater bulk of the smelted iron is sent to the plains for sale in circular lumps weighing about 2 or 3 seers. These lumps, called dimi, sell at Chilarahi for from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 per maund. The best iron, however, which is known as iron valued pah, sells for from Rs. 10 to Rs. 12 per maund. Khasi iron is preferred to English, in consequence of its greater malleability. It is much used by the native iron-holders of Sylhet and the neighbouring Districts to make bearings for the rollers of their boats. When brought into the market, it is worth from half down, and it is this circumstance which renders the iron trade unprofitable. The cost of carriage from the Hills to the plains is about 4 annas per maund; and the traders, who are all Khasis themselves, affirm that they get an average profit of only 2 annas per maund." The tables of trade for 1883-84 return no smelted iron as exported from the Hills, but Rs. 3000 of iron implements exported, against nails and hoemongery imported to the value of Rs. 18,000.

The Manufactures of the District, besides iron, consist of coarse cotton and muslin cloth, plain silver work, cane implements of husbandry, conical huts made of the fibre of the pine-apple, coarse pottery, and mats and baskets. With the exception of the

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previous twenty years. The oranges, like the limes, were brought down to Mr. Ingle' depot at Chhatak, where they were sold to the dealers at the rate of about Rs. 1. 12 per 1000, or less than half their present estimated price. It is stated in Mr. Allen's Report, that the Calcutta market was then chiefly supplied from the groves of Shella Pinji and Bar Pinji; the produce of the other villages was more perishable, and required to be sold in the neighbouring Districts. The fruit is known in Calcutta as "Sylhet oranges." The Sanjui registration returns for 1876-77 show a total export from Sylhet of 64,503 maunds of "fruit," valued at Rs. 155,575, or £15,557.

The export of raw cotton appears to have greatly increased. In 1876-77 the total quantity exported was 36,000 maunds, valued at Rs. 216,000, or £21,600, at the rate of Rs. 6 per maund. Twenty years before the export had been only 12,000 maunds, valued at Rs. 40,000, at the rate of only Rs. 3. 8 per maund. The cotton is of inferior quality, with a short and woolly staple. It is chiefly consumed by the Sylhet weavers. The total registered export from that District in 1876-77 was only 1,500 maunds, valued at Rs. 14,500, at the high rate of Rs. 13 per maund.

The chief article of import now, as twenty years ago, is rice; for the hill men have never grown sufficient for their own consumption, and the recent establishment of the Civil Station of Shillong has increased the demand. In 1876-77 the total imports of rice were estimated at 203,600 maunds, valued at Rs. 710,300, or £71,030, at the rate of Rs. 3. 8 per maund. Twenty years ago the imports were nearly as great, viz. 172,000 maunds; but the value was only Rs. 215,000, at the rate of Rs. 1. 8 per maund, or less than one-half the present value. The chief source of supply is Sylhet District, which sends its surplus to the tea gardens of Cachár, as well as to these Hills, and also exported, in the year 1876-77, 21,000 maunds of rice and 253,000 maunds of paddy into Bengal.

The importation of fish (fresh and dried) has enormously increased. In 1876-77 the total amount was 33,500 maunds, valued at Rs. 113,900, or £11,390, at the rate of Rs. 6 per maund. Twenty years ago the value was only Rs. 20,000, but the quantity is not given. The preparation of dried fish is a flourishing industry in the adjoining District of Sylhet.

The importation of cotton cloth has increased in an almost equal proportion. The value in 1876-77 was Rs. 138,000, or £13,800, as

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625 In 1835, when British authority was first extended to the Khási
648 Hills, the cost of maintaining the police, from the rank of *jowáddár*
965 or head constable upwards, was £45; and in 1840, £33, 16s. By
1860, when the Jáintia Hills had been annexed, and a *thánd* opened
at Jowái, the cost had risen to £480. In the year 1869 the strength
of the regular police was 149 men in the Khási Hills, and an
additional 23 in Jáintia.

In 1873 the police stations of the Khási and Jáintia Hills were
as follow:—The force consisted of 2 inspectors on a salary of
upwards of Rs. 100 a month, or £120 a year; 3 sub-inspectors and
15 head constables on a salary of less than Rs. 100 a month; and
113 constables on an average pay of Rs. 9 a month, or £10, 16s. a
year. The total pay of subordinate officers amounted to Rs. 8,340
or £834 a year; and the total pay of constables to Rs. 12,168 or
£1216, 16s. Certain contingencies brought up the aggregate expenses
to Rs. 24,563 or £2456, 6s. The total number of men of all
ranks was 132. As compared with the area and population of the
District, these figures show one man to every 18·49 square miles, or
to every 1,533 persons of the population, maintained at a cost of
Rs. 2 : 10 or 8s. 1½d. per square mile, and of 2 *dandi* 12 *pice* or 4½d.
per head of population. Of the total force, 1 officer and 13 men
were employed to guard the jail, 3 officers and 23 men to guard the
treasury and lock-up and to serve as escorts, leaving 104 officers and
77 men available for general duty.

649 CRIMINAL STATISTICS.—The District of the Khási and Jáintia Hills,
692 like the other Hill Districts of Assam, is administered by political
officers, under special rules framed under Act xxii. of 1869. Petty
criminal cases are disposed of by the indigenous magistracy, and
only cases of a heinous character are reported to the political officers.
Similarly, civil causes are referred to arbitration, according to the
indigenous system of village *panchâyat*; and the Deputy-Commissioner reports that this system, while affording equal justice to the
people, tends to preserve them from the evil of litigiousness.

679 In 1874 the total number of cases reported by the police to the
• 171 political officers was 83, as compared with 63 in the previous year.
In these 83 cases, 102 persons were arraigned, of whom 71 were put
on their trial; 61 persons, or 86 per cent., were convicted, and 10
were acquitted.

Though little serious crime exists in the Hills, yet the number of
offences shows a tendency towards increase. The Report of the

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Deputy-Commissioner for 1876-77 states that in that year 168 persons in all were brought before the magistracy, the most common classes of cases being theft and house trespass. In the same year 83 civil suits were instituted, of which 83 were for money claims, 2 for immoveable property, 2 for restitution of conjugal rights, and 2 in connection with religion and caste. In the Political Court there were 32 cases tried during the year, of which 13 were civil and 18 criminal. In the latter class of cases process issued against 60 persons, of whom 20 were convicted and 40 acquitted. The details of the two following cases will illustrate the condition of social life in the District. The first was a case of grievous hurt. The Siem of Mylliem had sent four persons to fetch a man named U Dorja, who had been selected to marry the Siem's sister. While on their way the messengers were attacked by a number of persons, evidently relatives of U Dorja who were opposed to the marriage. One of these was severely beaten, and died within twelve days from pneumonia. The offenders, numbering five in all, were sentenced to pay a fine of Rs. 10 (£1) each, or in default to suffer fourteen days' imprisonment. The second case was one of oppression. It originated in a dispute about land, situated in a locality over which both the Siem of Nongkhlau and the Lyngdoh of Sohiong claimed to exercise jurisdiction. The parties out of possession had gone to lay their complaint before the Siem, whereupon the Lyngdoh, with eight other persons, seized three of the complainants' kinsmen, ill-treated them, and kept them in duresse with the object of having the complaint submitted to himself for adjudication. The Lyngdoh was sentenced to a fine of Rs. 50 (£5), and his companions were warned and discharged.

JAIL STATISTICS.—There are two jails in the Khási and Jaintia Hills:—(1) The jail at Shillong, which is directly under the charge of the Deputy-Commissioner; and (2) the lock-up at Jowái, under the Assistant-Commissioner. It has been proposed to build a new jail at Shillong; the present structure consists only of bamboo huts, surrounded by a fence of the same material.

The following are the jail statistics for 1873:—Daily average number of prisoners, 40·30, of whom 1·05 were females; daily average number of sick, 1·40; number of deaths, 4, or 10 per cent. of the average daily strength. The total expenditure was Rs. 3,430 (£343), or an average of Rs. 181 (£18, 2s.) per prisoner. This high rate of expenditure is due to the cost of rations at Shillong.